

Welcome to the Montana Seat Belt Awareness Toolkit

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This Seat Belt Awareness Toolkit has been compiled by the Montana Department of Transportation Seat Belt Emphasis Workgroup. The purpose of this resource is to assist you in your efforts to raise awareness in your community about the importance of seat belt use for all Montanans. This toolkit is a collection of Montana specific information to help guide and prepare you for delivering your message to friends, family, colleagues, business and community leaders on the importance of seat belt use.

Motor vehicle crashes represent the number one cause of unintentional injury, the leading cause of death for Montanans age 1 to 44. Nearly three out of every four motor vehicle occupants killed in crashes every year are unrestrained at the time of the crash (MT DOT Problem Identification 2009) and those who are not killed sustain more severe injuries than restrained occupants. These preventable injuries not only result in life-long disability, they also cost Montanans over \$14 million dollars in hospital care that is uncompensated or paid by Medicaid (Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center, 2009).

The goal of this toolkit is to give you the tools you will need to educate friends, family and leaders in your community that seat belts save lives and should be used by everyone whenever riding or driving in a vehicle.

You are encouraged to talk with others and share any of the information in this toolkit with as many people as you can. If you have suggestions for adding material or revising the content of this toolkit, please contact Bobbi Perkins, 406-444-4126 or bperkins@mt.gov

Continuity gives us roots; change gives us branches, letting us stretch and grow and reach new heights. ~Pauline R. Kezer